

**FREDERICK COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING MINUTES  
DEPARTMENT OF AGING  
May 11, 2015**

<b>COA MEMBERS</b>	<b>DOA STAFF</b>	<b>EXCUSED</b>	<b>UNEXCUSED</b>	<b>GUESTS</b>
Mary Beachley	Sue Ramsburg	Randy McClement, Mayor		
John Brown	Carolyn True	Pat Rosensteel		
Elizabeth Chung				
Ernell Graham				
Carol Haag				
M.C. Keegan-Ayers				
Tom Lawler				
Dianne Lewis				
Tish Raff				
Katie Rhinehart-Hemler				
Virginia Skelley				
Roberta Speace				
Cynthia White				

- I. **Call to Order** – Carol Haag called the meeting to order at 1:36pm.
- II. **Welcome & Introductions** – Carol welcomed all attendees. Commission members and Dept of Aging staff introduced themselves to the audience.
- III. **Action on the Agenda** – Carol would like to postpone today’s Commission business meeting. Bobbie Speace made a motion to accept this proposal and Ginny Skelley seconded. All were in favor.
- IV. **Presentation** – Carol introduced Carol Cober, Muriel Cole, and Miriam Kelty who will be presenting at today’s meeting. She gave a

brief bio for each of the presenters. They are experts in Maryland in regard to the “Villages” concept. The Village concept allows individuals to age in their home with the assistance of an established network of support which may include paid staff, volunteers, and/or skilled neighbors within their own community.

Carol Cober is the leader of the statewide Maryland Community of Practice and the emerging Village in Sandy Spring-Ashton. She gave an overview of the history of Villages in Maryland. The Villages concept is a cultural shift which facilitates aging in place. One important aspect of creating a Village is to take what is already in place and build on it. Carol reviewed some of the successful communities in Maryland. There continues to be new communities evolving in different areas of the state and are different models of this concept. The models will vary on size and location, on the need for independence or government collaboration, the composition of members, diversity of age/income, and the make-up of paid staff vs all volunteers. Carol gave specific Maryland examples of most of these models. Some of the villages get started with grant support but the continuation should be consumer driven. A community development approach relies on the talents of those in the community to become self-reliant and self-supporting. There is no wrong model and each type may function very differently from other successful communities. It may be helpful to reach out to leaders of the established communities to get ideas and encouragement.

Miriam Kelly is the co-founder of Bannockburn’s “Nan” - Neighbors Assisting Neighbors, an all-volunteer, no fee, no membership model in Montgomery County. She assists with the coordination of volunteers and other services providers. Her community started when the neighborhood was very young and it grew from that. It started as a small gathering when one specific couple was in need of assistance. A group was organized and established a mission/vision of supporting neighbors who want to age in their community and improve the quality of life of all who live in the community. This is an intergenerational organization within the community. A planning group developed the model which would suit this community which is intergenerational, all volunteer, and included no fee or membership and is open to all. A basic survey was sent to all in the community to assess interests/talents and needs. This community organization decided to become incorporated as a non-profit in order to get assistance. A Board of Directors was established which meets on a regular basis. Liability insurance was considered, but not deemed necessary because of the Maryland Good Samaritan Act. Neighborhood events help to keep communication open and recruit new members/volunteers. The top three needs/requests are transportation, social programs, and household chores. Each

volunteer in the community has a different skill set and can offer various services. There is training available to those who need to assist someone with specific needs such as mobility issues or hearing/vision deficits. Communication to relay need for services is conveyed a list-serve or phone calls. This community organization supports the needs of the residents, strengthens the sense of community, recruits/trains volunteers and is a resource for information. The organization has existed for about six years and has been successful. Some of the challenges encountered are difficulty in identifying those with unspoken needs. Some seniors continue to be isolated and some older seniors unsafe to live alone are moved near family with little notice to the community and their current support system. The organization has accomplished the task of allowing seniors to remain in their home and to have a voice in shaping the services, a sense of community has been established, social engagement is encouraged, volunteerism is promoted, and options are expanded for senior citizens.

Muriel Cole is the Founder of the Kent County program, "Home Ports", the first countywide Village program in Maryland. This program covers a more rural area and is a more classic model and has paid staff. This organization is also an incorporated nonprofit. There are volunteers and paid vendors/providers to provide services. There were three years of planning which started with a survey. The needs/requests for services are similar to other aging communities. Benefits allow for screened vendors, home safety evaluation, transportation within the county, consumer advocacy, referrals to community agencies, and social/educational events. Referrals are provided for vendors for many different types of services. The vendors have been interviewed and screened and often offer a discount. The annual budget is \$60-\$70,000 a year. This is provided by membership fees and some fundraising. There is a yearly membership fee of \$350.00 and financial aid is available and limited to 10% of membership. The major expense is the paid staff. There is very little grant funding and no public funding. Membership is limited to those over 55 who live in Kent County. The organization has partnerships with other local agencies. There are about 80 households who have a membership, 70 approved providers, 78 volunteers and 300 requests for services. There was a six month pilot program to begin which included about 18 households. After the pilot, participants were surveyed and interest was sufficient to continue with implementation of the program.

**V. Announcements – No announcements.**

**VI. Public Comments–**

Question – does the program help with elderly disease management?

One village works with local hospitals to provide a house call program. Some volunteers are trained to do medical note taking for medical appointments. A volunteer can also set up a weekly medicine case so that medications can be managed. There is also a safety inspection provided by some village leaderships. It is a bonus if medical professions are a part of the community.

Question – What parameters determine the size of the Village?

It can be started with an entire city or a specific zip code. Advice is to go where the energy is.

Question - Are you able to contact a family member if a member is in need?

Members complete a form with emergency contact information.

Question – What happens when conflict arises? Who mediates?

Not all Villages have mediation, but some emerging Villages have these services.

Question– Is there issues with how the younger generation treat the senior generation because they don't understand the aging process?

There is a need to keep it intergenerational and continue to educate members.

Question – Who does the home safety visits? It is a great concept, but would be nice to have a network of providers.

Sometimes it is an OT or just someone trained in home safety.

Those doing the safety visit can only advise. Sometimes a check list is used so the member has some follow-up.

Question – Is it difficult to include the affluent individuals in the community who do not want to become a member?

The vast majority of the villages are fairly affluent and mostly white. It may be a challenge to make more diverse communities work. People in working environments may not have as much time to devote to participating in the volunteer aspect. Individuals need to be willing to participate.

Question – Has there been any success in engaging the minority community?

Socioeconomically diverse individuals may not have as intense a feeling of community. It may depend on the leadership and who is doing the coordinating. Leadership should come from within the community.

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Question – What is the best way to engage those who are college age or high school?

It was recommended to start with the arts and schedule activities with children. Some high schools require service hours and this is a way for individuals to acquire these service hours. Find a common interest.

Question – Is there always a membership fee?

Not all villages have a membership fee. There are varying rates for varying services.

Carol Haag encouraged attendees to think about organizations and communities that may be interested in starting a village. Carol offered to send the presentation to anyone who signed up with their email address. There are many resources available to help groups expand on their ideas.

The meeting adjourned at 3:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Ramsburg  
Recording Secretary